



# THE PRESCRIBER E-LETTER

## Tamper Resistant Prescription Requirements

Tamper-resistant prescription requirements are being phased in over the next seven months. Effective April 1, 2008, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will require that all Medicaid prescription blanks incorporate **at least one** of the characteristics listed below. To be considered tamper resistant after October 1, 2008, prescription blanks must include **all three** of the following characteristics:

- one or more industry-recognized features designed to prevent unauthorized copying of a completed or blank prescription form;
- one or more industry-recognized features designed to prevent the erasure or modification of information written on the prescription by the prescriber; and
- one or more industry-recognized features designed to prevent the use of counterfeit prescription forms.

For more information about tamper-resistant requirements, go to the CMS Web site at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov>. The CMS Web site also includes recently updated information that may be of value to health facilities using tamper-resistant computer paper.

MassHealth has met with representatives from pharmacy and medical organizations to develop the characteristics of a tamper-resistant blank that would meet the federal requirements and be easily used by all providers. Based on our discussions with that group, MassHealth suggests including the following features on prescriptions:

- a heat-sensitive feature that will either change color or disappear and then reappear when rubbed (e.g., sensing imprint or thermochromic ink);
- erasure protection, such that the prescription has a background that resists alteration and erasure (e.g., special security paper); and
- use of a latent, repetitive, printed word "Void" that will appear across the front of the prescription if it is scanned or photocopied. This feature must be patterned in such a way as not to obscure prescribing information.

In addition, MassHealth recommends including a warning band describing the security features on the prescription to make it easier for pharmacists to identify that your prescription is tamper-resistant.

Prescriptions must also continue to meet all other requirements of federal and state laws and regulations.

MassHealth does not plan to endorse specific suppliers of tamper-resistant blanks. The Massachusetts Medical Society, however, has posted links to some Web sites to help providers find vendors for tamper-resistant blanks. For more information, go to their Web site at [www.massmed.org/rx](http://www.massmed.org/rx).

Exceptions to the tamper-resistant requirements include prescriptions that are

- electronic, verbal, or faxed;
- reimbursed through a MassHealth managed care organization (MCO);
- for drugs reimbursed as part of a bundled rate; and
- Refilled when the original prescription was filled before April 1, 2008.

Emergency fills are allowed as long as a prescriber provides a verbal, faxed, electronic, or compliant written prescription within 72 hours.

*The Prescriber E-Letter* is an update designed to enhance the transparency and efficiency of the MassHealth drug prior authorization (PA) process and the MassHealth Drug List. Each issue will **highlight** key clinical **information and updates** to the **MassHealth Drug List**. The Prescriber E-Letter was prepared by the MassHealth Drug Utilization Review Program and the MassHealth Pharmacy Program.